New York Tribune

First to Last—the Truth: News—Editorials—Advertisements.

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The Josephan Tragedy.

The saddest figure these days in Washington is Secretary Daniels. For him the President's "triumphal" Western tour has been a grisly tragedy.

So far as the country's naval policy is concerned the President has completely de-Josephusized himself. If we ought to have "incomparably the greatest navy in the world," as Mr. Wilson told the people of St. Louis—if we are to have a navy to fight with, not to toy with as a mere instrumentality of popular education—where any longer does Josephus come in? What is left of his usefulness to the Navy Department either as a theorist or as an administrator?

In view of the President's "incomparably the greatest navy" declaration, we are inclined to think that even Uncle Ben Tillman will now admit that Mr. Daniels has ceased to be, for the purposes of this Administration, "the greatest Secretary the navy ever had."

Once he wore that proud title without challenge—even in Cabinet meetings. Mr. Wilson was for him without reservation when he started in to make the navy an adjunct to the common school system—"the biggest university in America," as he called it. He had the President's sympathy when, in December, 1914—after the perilous effects of the Great War on our fortunes and policies had already become apparent—he blue-pencilled the recommendations of the General Board of the Navy for new construction and bleated for disarmament in this Bryanesque fashion:

> There are reasons to hope that the horrors and cost of this war will hasten the coming of the day for a conference of the powers to consider the safe steps to be taken to reduce armament and dreadnoughts and submarines. It may not be opportune at this time for our Republic to move for such a conference, but when peace smiles upon this war-torn globe there may be reserved for America the coveted honor of initiating a movement which will make possible a reduction of fighting craft without imperilling the rights of any peoples. Is it too much to believe this generation will witness such an agreement, and men now living will see the good hour prophesied by Tennyson when
>
> "The war drum throbbed no longer, and the battle flags were furled
> In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world"?

Mr. Wilson stood behind Mr. Daniels when he insisted a year ago on a smaller increase for the navy than Congress was ready to grant—and a very much smaller increase than the General Board had held to be indispensable. Even after he had strangled the proposal in Congress to create something like a General Staff for the navy—absolutely necessary to insure its control and development along military lines—the President came over to the naval review in this harbor and effusively praised Mr. Daniels, in the presence of naval officers who knew from bitter experience just how inimical the Secretary's acts and policies had been to the good of the service.

This winter the Secretary, although enlarging his building programme somewhat under the pressure of public opinion, has been going along in the old way, combating real naval progress so far as he felt it safe to combat it. He refused to accept or to make public the 1915 building programme of the General Board. Instead, he sent the original report back and instructed the board to make a new report, with a limitation on cost set by himself. Then he published together his own plan and the General Board's variations on that plan, letting the country draw the inference that he and the board had come to a very remarkable agreement as to the navy's requirements.

Presently it leaked out that the board did not agree with him at all. His aim was to maintain the United States Navy, as at present, in fourth place, behind Great Britain, Germany and France, but ahead of Japan. The board's aim was to create a navy second to that of no other power. Yet the strongest "Big Navy" man on the board had never thought of suggesting that the American navy should at once be made "incomparably the greatest in the world."

Of all the stabs at Danielsism this was the cruellest. The Secretary had done his best to suppress sedition and criticism—to silence all carping within the Administration household. He had muzzled every officer under him. He had insisted on either praise or silence. Those who had the courage to speak their minds had been put on the blacklist. To Rear Admiral Fiske Mr. Daniels is reported to have said: "You may not discuss naval affairs publicly; you may not even say that two and two make four."

Yet the commander in chief of the navy has now made the Daniels policy of suppression ridiculous. He has condemned the Secretary's programme as uninformed and groping. Its aim is mistaken; it does not rise to a true realization of the country's needs. It is a back number. So is its author and champion.

If Mr. Wilson's conversion is real, then all that Mr. Daniels has ever stood for has become unreal. Shall he, too, suffer conversion, or shall he lay down his office, as Mr. Bryan did? That is the unhappy choice which now confronts the Secretary of the Navy. That is the nub and kernel of the Josephan tragedy.

Progress for the Schools.

The election of a president of the Board of Education to-day involves more than the victory of one of two rival factions in that body. On whether Mr. Willcox or Mr. Gillespie be chosen depends whether there shall be harmony and cooperation with the central city administration under the Mayor and the Board of Estimate or whether there shall be a continuation of the constant bickering and antagonism, to phrase it mildly, which have existed under the administration of President Churchill. There is scarcely room in the mind of any good citizen for doubt as to what is desirable.

It is extremely unfortunate that under Mr. Churchill the school system has not been kept out of politics. By that is not meant politics in the narrow and partisan sense, although the playing of that, too, has been alleged against the retiring president and his supporters. But broad questions of educational policy have not been treated on a basis of merit, but according to whether they were acceptable to the ruling powers. This has been notably true regarding the experiments with the Gary system. The antagonism toward the effort to create a small Board of Education failed equally to commend itself to the public because of the small and selfish spirit displayed. The endeavor to disrupt—or readjust—the school system through the McKee bills at Albany failed, fortunately, for it was calculated to undermine the morale of the entire service.

The Board of Education, which should be the most advanced and broad and intelligent and unselfish agency in the city's service, is, unfortunately, not up to that standard in any respect. As it is at present operated, it is a pretty efficient machine for carrying out personal or factional policies. That is precisely what the public does not want it to be. There is vast need for a new spirit of liberality, of breadth, of progress, in it. Whether the element in the board which is looked to to introduce this new order of things, with Mr. Willcox as its candidate, shall have the opportunity is the real issue of the election to-day.

Miss Mollie's Jubilee.

Among the tales of self-victory which should encourage us to believe that mankind is really making moral progress is the one of Miss Mollie Fancher's cheerful martyrdom of half a century. She and her friends in Brooklyn have met within a day or so actually to celebrate her "golden jubilee in bed." For fifty years, or ever since February 3, 1866, less than a year after Appomattox and the assassination of Lincoln, Miss Mollie has remained in bed—such an incarceration staggers the imagination. That one should survive it at all is wonderful enough, but that one should survive it without loss of spirits, with no impairment of the will to live, is a miracle. Miss Mollie's victory puts to shame a world of surrenders over which we have all been far too prone to sentimentalize.

And now at the age of sixty-eight years she has the satisfaction of knowing that her life, passed within the confines of a four-poster, has been neither a burden nor a depressant to her friends, but an inspiration worth more than all her effort to smile through pain, and to face without protest an unbroken vista of awakenings to bedridden helplessness. The anniversary is indeed a jubilee. We felicitate the dainty, eager, bright little Miss Mollie, propped up against her snowy pillows in her gayly decorated prison. No monarch in a golden age ever deserved half the respect which is her due from the members of a race which she adorns as the very best of good sports.

Another Unfortunate Mistake.

It is perhaps not merely an accidental coincidence that further details of the Melanie incident have been gleaned "from an authoritative source" at the very moment when the Dutch papers, pro and anti German alike, are crying out for a prompt explanation of the sinking of the tank steamer Artemis by a German torpedo boat. According to the "authoritative" information now published, the vessel described as the Melanie hoisted the Dutch flag and, with the flag still flying, fired upon and twice attempted to ram a German submarine. In Germany, at least, this circumstance will pass as a sufficient explanation of the unfortunate mistake in the case of the Artemis, and perhaps it will be accepted by the minority of Hollanders who have German leanings.

One or two of the Dutch papers have indeed gone half way to meet a German excuse, the "Vaderland" asking, with some show of resentment, what the British fleet was about while a German patrol flotilla was cruising between the Hook of Holland and the Noordhinder Lightship—as if it were the duty of the British to provide against German mistakes. In the main, however, their indignation is directed entirely against the real offenders, and the "Nieuwe Courant" sees in the accident a collapse of "the vaunted German organization and discipline."

It may be recalled that about a year ago the German government virtually washed their hands of all consequences that might follow upon what they called "the misuse of the neutral flag by English merchant vessels." That neutral flags have been used to avoid capture every one knows. It is a custom of the sea established for centuries and expressly recognized in the British merchant shipping act of 1894, where provision is made against the use of the British flag by foreign vessels, *unless* it be "for the purpose of escaping capture by an enemy or by a foreign ship of war."

For the Germans, however, it will probably suffice that inasmuch as the Dutch flag has been used as a ruse by the enemy any Dutch flag may be fired on. As to the truth of the complaint that the Melanie attacked the submarine while the flag was still flying, it is of no consequence, for the German commander may have fancied that his adversary "planned" an attack, and that, as we have learned, is a sufficient excuse "even if the commander should have been mistaken." In any case, the sinking of the Artemis was an obvious mistake, and there is no difficulty here in finding a German word to describe it. The only complaint of the Hollanders is that they have heard that word too often.

Anthrax and Cheap Furs.

A fatal case of anthrax reported here a few months ago was attributed conjecturally to a cheap fur collar worn by the victim, but at the time the guess was not taken seriously, as the evidence was manifestly insufficient. Since then, however, an inquiry into the circumstances of a case in Brooklyn has led to the discovery that skins from Barren Island are used largely by manufacturers of cheap furs and, moreover, that some of these skins have been found to be infected. A report has already been drawn up recommending that the use of such skins for apparel be forbidden.

Until the report is published it is impossible, of course, to judge of the thoroughness of the investigation, but the possibility of infection in this manner is undeniable. Quite recently Dr. Elworthy, pathologist of the West London Hospital, reported three cases of anthrax, all of which were almost unquestionably attributable to manufactured articles.

The first patient died in sixty hours without a definite diagnosis having been made, but a subsequent bacteriological examination led to the conviction that the cause of death was anthrax, the bacillus having probably entered the blood stream through the skin of the neck. As his occupation did not suggest anthrax, an attempt was made to guess at all conceivable sources of infection, and suspicion fell first on the shaving brush, which was new and very cheap. By culture and inoculation into guinea pigs it was clearly established that the brush was infected. But as the infection might have been due to contact with an abraded anthrax lesion, five brushes of the same make were bought in the market. All of them were infected with anthrax.

In both of the other cases reported by Dr. Elworthy the examination was equally thorough, and in each the shaving brush was shown to be the source of infection. If anthrax can be conveyed by the shaving brush, it is by no means inconceivable that it may be conveyed by manufactured furs.

Austria, having admitted women to the professions and industries because of the war's artificial creation of a demand for workers, now looks forward pessimistically to the handling of a full-fledged feminist problem with the coming of peace—whenever it comes.

Those German newspapers which are hailing the Zeppelin raids as masterpieces of German genius will find themselves in difficulties with Admiral von Tirpitz if they don't modify their enthusiasm.

Norfolk is now wresting from Hoboken the proud distinction of being considered a suburb of Bremen.

Australia's Grand Old Man.

(From The Boston Herald.)

It would be amazing to see a man entering the British House of Commons in his seventy-first year, were not the man Sir George Houston Reid. But he seems to be always young for parliamentary work, though he had thirty years of it in Australia before going to London, in 1910, as High Commissioner for the commonwealth. He was but seventeen when he emigrated from Scotland to New South Wales, and all the strength of his manhood was given to the important undertaking which he soon saw to be necessary—the rousing of the Australian colonies to the identity of their interests and the value of a federal organization. While Premier of New South Wales, 1894-'99, he carried the federal movement to success. As one of the foremost founders of the commonwealth, he merited the honor which came to him five years later, that of being appointed Prime Minister of Australia. This naturally led to the office of High Commissioner, in which he has just completed his term of service.

As a public speaker Australia's grand old man is highly effective, and his humor and shrewdness arrest attention, as when, on his seventieth birthday, he thus related his philosophy of life: "I have aimed at health and happiness, and when confronted by a formidable obstacle I have first tried to knock it over; failing this, to get around it; if not, then under it, and, if all these manœuvres failed, I have been content to lie down in its grateful shade, lauding it as a beautiful blessing in disguise." But those who know him well do not think of him as ever lying down; they always think of him as standing up and working to the end.

"Old Ironsides" Again.

(From The Providence Journal.)

"Old Ironsides" is not without friends. A bill for an appropriation of $150,000 by Congress to be expended upon the maintenance of the celebrated warship of old times indicates that the patriotic sentiment revived by the poem of Oliver Wendell Holmes is not extinguished. Of course, it is understood that the old Constitution cannot be made into an effective fighting craft. A wooden vessel cannot enter into an engagement with the least formidable of the modern battleships. But it does not follow that an appropriation for keeping the Constitution afloat will be wasted, for the preservation of "Old Ironsides" may easily be regarded as one of the duties of a patriotic people.

It is infinitely better to spend $150,000 upon the Constitution, which in the early days of the Republic commanded the admiration and respect of the world, than to waste the same amount upon Federal buildings where there is no legitimate demand for great structures of granite or marble, or upon the dredging of creeks having no possible value as waterways. The money needed for the Constitution can be diverted from the pork barrel layout without arousing public indignation. Indeed, it is reasonable to assume that such action would appeal to the imagination of the people.

THE PHILIPPINE BETRAYAL

Passage of the Jones Bill a Breach of Trust.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: The passage of the Jones bill, with the Clarke amendment, is the occasion for heartfelt protestation on the part of those who know from actual observation and experience the almost total unfitness of the Filipinos for greater participation in their government. Were it not for the partisan nature of the legislation, the passage of such a measure would be an unparalleled example of lack of intelligent lawmaking on the part of our lawmakers as a whole. It is preferable to believe a misguided notion of principle has been responsible for some of our legislators giving support to so irrational a clause of the Baltimore platform as the Philippine independence declaration by voting for that consummate piece of folly, the Jones bill, and its Quixotic amendment. We prefer to believe that were the Philippine measure made strictly non-partisan, as in justice to the Filipinos it should be, these same sponsors for the bill would prove their statesmanship by voting it down.

To grant independence, or even greater participation in their government than they now enjoy, to the Filipinos amounts to shirking our duty as guardian of the interests of the mass of sober-minded, practical Filipino citizens who fear independence, since they know full well that the "politicos" who agitate for independence are doing so because of the excellent opportunity it would afford them to exploit their unfortunate countrymen for their own aggrandizement.

It is a deplorable piece of shortsighted statesmanship which allows so valuable a commercial asset as the Philippines to be practically fooled away. The resources at present undeveloped are enormous. If we would emulate the example of certain foreign governments and establish a firm, rational, paternal colonial government at once, so that commercial enterprise would not be hazardous for neither natives nor foreigners, the benefit not only to the Filipinos but to our citizens and government would more than justify the action. To let the islands become the prey of those lying in wait is one with the policy which legislates our ships off the Pacific at a time when our interests require fostering in that very quarter.

Let us hope that those to whom the final disposition of the bill is consigned will awake to the evils that will accrue if it becomes a law and will kill so ill-advised a monument to our national inefficiency in disposing of a trust.

B. B. SHELP.

Amsterdam, N. Y., R. D. 3, Feb. 4, 1916.

Don't Ignore the Experts.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: President Wilson in one of his addresses on preparedness warns the people not to pay too much attention to the views of army and navy men.

If men who have risen in the army to the position of generals and in the navy to admirals do not know what is demanded of both the army and the navy to make them efficient in repelling invasion, who does? These men are experts in their respective lines, they have studied military conditions as they exist to-day on the European battlefields, they know the military weakness of the United States, and there is more danger of an understatement of the nation's needs than of an overstatement. Yet the President, who preaches efficiency to our business men all the time, tells us to beware of men whose only anxiety is to make our army and navy efficient. Of course, this can never be done as to the army on any scheme such as the President suggests of training citizens for a short time each year or on the plan of utilizing the army to construct public works at the same time that they are being trained as soldiers. A soldier cannot be made by any such slipshod methods, and the sooner the President and the people of this country realize that fact the better.

Train the soldier, let us say, for two years (that is long enough) and then let him retire to the reserves and hold himself in readiness for his country's call. By keeping the ranks full of recruits as men retire, in a comparatively brief period we could have a million men ready to spring to arms if wanted.

State militia and a so-called continental army would be of little or no value in repelling an army of veteran Europeans like the Germans. Our military experts know this, and it is far from being wise on the part of President Wilson to ignore their advice or to teach the people to ignore it. M. T. R.

New York, Feb. 1, 1916.

Thanks!

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: I think it was Oliver W. Holmes who said: "If you are pleased with anything a writer says and doubt whether to tell him of it, do not hesitate; a pleasant word is a cordial to one who perhaps thinks he is tiring you, and so becomes tired himself. I purr very loud over a good honest letter that says pretty things to me."

I wish to thank you for myself and for my friends, many of whom will be able to read this particularly telling editorial, appearing in to-day's issue, "Belgium—Again." I am in the habit of sending to different parts of the world the most striking of The Tribune's editorials, and I have many pretty replies coming back. I will just quote one from an Englishman: "I appreciate very much the Tribunes you have sent me; I find my sentiments accord very much with what has been written by that fine writer of its leaders. We have all been delighted." And if the words of Balzac are true, "praise is such a blessing to us artists, it primes us with courage," the writer can render no better service than to send the appreciation along. JOHN RULE.

New York, Feb. 2, 1916.

A Penalty of Appreciation.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: I wish I could adequately express to you my gratitude for your editorial of the 2d inst., "Belgium—Again." You have said it all, and said it splendidly, and it is indeed a stubborn mind which cannot or will not admit the truth and justice of your words.

I also greatly appreciated Edward Fuller's verse, "Germany." It expresses my own sentiments to the letter.

And that was an exceedingly clever little article this morning—"Where Is Thy Sting?"

It is getting so that I use all my postage stamps writing to thank you for your editorials and for letters from various readers appearing in your columns. M. C.

New York, Feb. 4, 1916.

For Humanity and Civilization.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: During a few weeks' stay in New York I have read the editorial page of The Tribune with the greatest pleasure, and would like to tell you of my appreciation. It is a splendid thing when the press stands for right.

In your editorial of February 2, "Belgium—Again," you certainly voiced the sentiments that stand for Christianity, humanity and civilization. Every word spelled truth. It was wonderful. A CANADIAN.

New York, Feb. 3, 1916.

EMANCIPATOR?

WHAT AILS THE NATION?

Blinded by Prosperity, Its Sons Effeminate from the Luxuries of an Easy Life, It Turns a Deaf Ear to All Warnings—It Has More Policemen to Protect Citizens than Soldiers to Protect Country.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: "We have already and unnecessarily wasted a whole year of the time granted to us by a kind Providence to prepare for the trials which may well await us in the near future, when it was virtually a crime to waste a single hour."

This summarization of the neglect of national defences given in a letter by Charles J. Bonaparte, ex-Secretary of the Navy, raises the question, "What ails the country?" New and unmistakable signs of national perils from without are appearing day by day; yet there is no general uprising of men on village greens or city squares, forming into companies and drilling for the defence of their homes.

What has happened in the last year has shown that America without adequate defences against invasion has been living in a fool's paradise. We have been lulled into dangerous repose by the erroneous reflection that the days of war had passed and the possibility of an invasion of the United States was a myth. Blinded with prosperity, made effeminate by the enjoyment of luxuries which have come to us from ordinary industry in a land of extraordinary opportunity, we have weakly seized upon every sounding phrase to let our national defences shrink.

In families it is often only "three generations from shirt sleeves to shirt sleeves"—that is to say, the grandfather, as a young man, made money by the development of his strength and ability, and his sons were therefore released from the necessity of intense exertion, and, in consequence, the virility of the line grew weak in the second generation. The grandsons, still further enervated by the ease of their fathers, spent the last of the fortune, and, without the strength or ability of their forebears, were compelled to start to work at the low level where the grandfather began.

A comparative study of history will show that in the rise and fall of nations there are cycles of time which correspond to the three generations mentioned, and that always the decline has been preceded by the era of great wealth, of many servants—the days in which pleasure rose to the height of a national institution.

We are wealthy, but we are weak in that the average man has come to regard a personal part in the defence of the nation as something that can be delegated to another, forgetting for a moment that this great life we are living in the United States has been not merely handed down to us, but was prepared for us only at the expense of several wars by men who were mentally strong enough to stand for right, and, if need be, to die for it. If our forebears had been peace-at-any-price men what would our country be to-day? Whose serfs would the peace-at-any-price men of to-day be?

The timid, peace-at-any-price thought, whether secretly held or publicly proclaimed, is an undebatable symptom of national decline. Its adherents are the logical, soft by-product of great national wealth, men who, whether personally rich or in modest circumstances, are so weakened by the ease with which an abundance of the good things of life are gained that they have lost both vision and perspective.

The complexity of our national life has obscured our vision. Endless diversions have weakened the current of public thought. We are all specialists in something, and we turn over to other people everything else needful for sustenance and wellbeing. We have been doing this so long it has been bred in the bone, and national defence is by routine left to somebody else, with, however, this limitation—there must be no development of the militaristic!

But the delegation of power and the limitation of authority granted by public opinion clash. If the one prevails the other cannot prevail. So that we come to a second defect and symptom in public intelligence—another indication of the loss of perspective.

The wasted year and the complacency with which men pursue money and pleasure while the sword hangs by a thread over the nation's head indicate the first stage of an insidious decay which in nations, as well as in families, may creep down the line with the years!

True, Congress will this winter provide for a somewhat larger army and a somewhat larger navy, with eyes (aeroplanes and hydroplanes) for both, but this proposed step was made possible only after the lapse of a year of watchful waiting on a lethargic public sentiment, and even now the apathy, the national weakness, will be revealed anew by the opposition of an alarmingly large number of Senators and Representatives.

John B. Gough used to cry: "Young man, the rapids are below you!" Well might a voice that would carry from shore to shore now cry, "Young nation, the rapids are below you!" for the perils are great, and the greatest of all is the feeling common to the average man that, at least until invasion comes, we can authorize makeshift appropriations at Washington and go serenely on our various ways, leaving it to somebody else to carry the musket.

On the other hand, we have an ex-Cabinet officer proclaiming the doctrine that if we are not prepared all will go well with us. We were not prepared in 1775, but the Revolution came. We were not prepared in 1812, but war was thrust upon us. We were not prepared in 1861, and because we were not prepared on that occasion the nation was shaken to its very foundations. We were not adequately prepared in 1898, but nevertheless great responsibilities were thrust upon us.

What ails the nation? We have well meaning citizens who are opposed to an army to protect us against such a fate as that of Belgium, of Poland and of Serbia, yet these citizens do not show the same faith in their own countrymen, in their neighbors and townsmen that they profess to have in peoples living in foreign countries, for we have more policemen and watchmen in the United States to guard us from each other than we have soldiers in an army to protect us from an invasion. If the argument that an army leads to war is good, then the argument that a police force incites internal disaster should also be good.

Let no one be deceived by the propositions lately broached for our national defences. They are only the connecting link between what we should have and what will satisfy that portion of the public which is awake. If Congress does just enough to allay public alarm, just enough to make the public think that the gateway is being closed, then a new element is added to our danger—another measure of overconfidence.

What ails the nation? Behold one of its sons, grown rich beyond the dreams of avarice by reason of his success in building up a national institution of pleasure, standing ready to spend $10,000,000 to prevent the nation from protecting itself against dangers unmistakable!

Must we wait until war opens the gate of inferno upon this beautiful land of ours before we awake? All of our beautiful cities can remain standing just as they are, all the loss and horror of war can be avoided if we will adequately prepare against it now.

The great ailment that the American people as a whole are suffering from is overconfidence, borne of the possession of great wealth. We are pampered children of fortune, who feel because we do not want to fight we can run away to the protection of our homes and thus protect the present and future by ignoring unchangeable conditions.

JAMES E. CLARK.

New Rochelle, N. Y., Jan. 25, 1916.

Following Public Opinion.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Mr. Wilson at last is showing signs of true Americanism. I would have a much higher opinion of him had he called Congress together last February and spoken these brave words then. He seems to be simply following public opinion—not leading it.

New York, Feb. 3, 1916. G. E. N.

SELF-HOAXED

The Foolish American Notion That This Country Is Invincible.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: I listened with considerable interest some days ago to a discussion of the war situation; a discussion carried on principally by one man with quite decided opinions of his own. It was one of those discussions which epitomized the acute self-sufficiency of the average American concerning the absolute invincibility of this country; a sentiment obviously based upon the historical fiction which surrounds the chronicles of the United States with a false halo of glory.

When it was suggested to the chief party to the discussion that it is not a remote possibility that the United States will find itself embroiled in the European struggle, he, with a snort of disgust and a wave of the hand that forever disposed of the idea as being quite beyond the need of refutation, said: "Let 'em come! We can lick anything or anybody on earth!"

A brave sentiment, indeed! And one which met with instant and enthusiastic indorsement from every one within hearing.

In that statement, so confidently put forth, lies the root of a great danger to this country. Link that with our utter lack of preparedness and we are in a desperately precarious condition of false security, from which we are destined to be awakened with a rude jolt at no distant day.

We are the victims of the greatest self-hoax any part of the human race ever played on itself. Every one who is genuinely concerned for the future of this country ought to help rouse these self-deluded dreamers. There should go forth through the medium of such influential and farreaching channels as the columns of The Tribune a clarion call of warning that will penetrate their sentiment-drugged senses and bring them to a realization that this country is rushing toward a crisis which will be a sinister menace to the very existence of the nation.

The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Rebellion, the Spanish War—all fought under conditions long since antiquated—were all, in varying degrees, tests of our national strength, stamina and courage. But they were but outpost skirmishes compared with the colossal struggle which will, unless a miracle be vouchsafed us, come to this country before many years have passed—a struggle in which one American will most emphatically not be the equal of any two invaders, and in which he will find himself desperately busy giving a proper account of just one of them.

HOMER DUNNE.

Yonkers, N. Y., Feb. 2, 1916.

A Constructive Army.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: I note with interest your editorial, "A First Line First," regarding the National Guard and the Continental Army and the difficulty which is being encountered by the War Department in finding an army scheme which is acceptable.

I beg to suggest that there is a substitute plan which I have seen mentioned frequently of late and which is described in a pamphlet, "Invincible America," by H. G. Traver. The idea of this plan is to invite men into the army for the purpose of using them in construction work during such periods of the year as is not absolutely necessary for their military training. In this way the country would get much greater value from the men in time of peace, and the men themselves would be benefited by receiving heavy outdoor exercise and experience in trades that would be useful in civil life after retirement.

It is conceded by Secretary Garrison and by the Adjutant General that it will be difficult, if not impossible, to get sufficient men for the proposed increase in the regular army or for the Continental Army, whereas I have been informed that recent tests have been made to ascertain whether or not the men could be had for the Constructive Army and the results have been more than satisfactory.

It is possible that this Constructive Army plan not only has intrinsic merits over other army plans, but it may prove to be the only scheme which can be adopted in which sufficient men can be had.

WILLIAM T. SHERWOOD.

Bogota, N. J., Feb. 3, 1916.